

STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

PAUL BERG
Willson Professor of Biochemistry

September 13, 1977

Dr. Dan Nathans
Dept. of Microbiology
Johns Hopkins Medical School
Baltimore, MD

Dear Dan,

Enclosed are four drafts of the letter regarding the recombinant DNA matter. Three have identical beginnings (pages 1-4) but end in three different ways; the first paragraph on page 4 is ending #1, the second paragraph on page 4 is the second ending, and the last paragraph supplies ending #3. After completing these and getting some helpful reactions from Arthur Kornberg I wrote the fourth version. It was an attempt to make it shorter, less ponderous and, perhaps, more positive. As you might have guessed I prefer version #4 followed by #1 > #3 > #2.

In redoing this draft I tried to take into account the ideas (and some phrases) Dave Hogness and Stan Cohen conveyed in their drafts and what I could deduce from your comments to my first attempt. I'm not at all certain that this is the best but perhaps it's closer to what we can all agree upon. If not someone else should make a fresh attempt for us to consider.

By now you have received Norton Zinder's letter with his suggestion to defer our communication until some of the smoke has cleared. I don't agree but I'm not sure. The situation is changing very fast. Today, I heard that Kennedy is withdrawing his bill in favor of a proposal for a one year extension of the NIH Guidelines to industry pending a study of whether legislation is needed. Perhaps our letter will not be needed. If we could influence the NAS ad hoc committee report to come out against the need for legislation (in spite of the earlier conclusion to "reluctantly" support legislation they may be tilting towards opposing the need for any legislation) even Rogers might back off. If that happened the matter might die and our public statement would be unnecessary. The next week or so could be crucial.

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There may no longer be any urgency to get this done quickly. But if you let me know your reactions to versions 1-4 it would be helpful if we should need to have a unified statement in the near future.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Paul". The letter "P" is large and loops around the "a", and the "l" is a simple vertical stroke.

PB:ab